

REMARKS

Claims 17 to 32 are pending in the present application. It is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants note that the present application claims priority to German Published Patent Application No. 103 27 548.7. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner provide express acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and an indication that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received, in the next Office Communication.

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the previously filed Information Disclosure Statements, PTO-1449 papers and cited reference(s).

Claims 17 to 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0228366 ("Fuehrer") in view of Rahl Shah & Xuanming Dong, An Introduction to TTCAN, EE2900 Class Discussion, March 7, 2002, pages 17 to 35 ("Shah").

Claim 17 relates to a method for exchanging messages containing data between at least two stations over a bus system, the method including repeatedly transmitting over the bus system, by a first station, a reference message containing time information of the first station at at least one specifiable time interval, the time interval being subdivided as a basic cycle into time windows, *a pause period of variable duration being provided at an end of at least one basic cycle*, transmitting messages containing data in at least some of the time windows, and adapting the duration of the pause period to change a time of a start of a next basic cycle.

According to the presently claimed subject matter, several basic cycles and a pause period at the end of at least one basic cycle are provided. Since the pause period is not intended for data transfer in the basic cycle, it is therefore located at the end of the basic cycle. With such a pause period it is possible to shift the start of the next/following basic cycle in the messaging to overcome timing problems in the messaging.

It is respectfully submitted that the Fuehrer and Shah references, either alone or combined, do not disclose or suggest, these features of the presently claimed subject matter. Indeed, the Office Action admits that the Fuehrer reference does not disclose or suggest the feature of repeatedly transmitting over the bus system of a reference message containing time information of the first station and the division of this information as a basic

cycle into time windows, as provided for in the context of claim 17. More importantly, the Fuehrer reference does not disclose nor suggest the feature of the time gap or pause period at the end of at least one basic cycle, as in claim 17.

Likewise, the Shah reference also does not disclose or suggest the feature of a pause period at the end of a basic cycle, as with the claimed subject matter. Instead, the Shah reference refers on page 31 to an arbitration window within the basic cycle, the arbitration window being a normal time window in the basic cycle where the messages containing priority identifier are able to arbitrate. This means every station is able to send a message in this time window, but only the station with the highest priority achieves access to the bus (i.e., gains arbitration), whereby other time windows in a basic cycle are reserved for a special station or message (e.g. Msg A, Msg C...). So, in this instance, the arbitration window is a normal message window within the basic cycle and no pause period is provided.

The Shah reference also refers on page 31 to a free window, which is a message window not used for transmission (i.e., there is no need to use the window for transmission because the bus is not fully used), but this is a normal message window in the schedule that is usable for a message if needed without changing the message timing, the schedule or the start of a basic cycle. If a new station is added, or if a new message of an already connected station is to be transmitted, the free time window could be used. However, such a time window is also a normal message window and not a pause period. Moreover, even if the free window were to be treated as a pause period, such an alleged period does not occur at the end of a basic cycle, and therefore the window is not usable to change the start time of the following basic cycle because the first basic cycle has not finished when this free window arises.

In contrast, accordingly to the presently claimed subject matter, a pause period is provided at the end of at least one basic cycle to adapt the pause period to change start of the following basic cycle which helps to correct timing errors in a cycle consisting of more than one basic cycle or only for the following basic cycle. As explained above, such considerations are not disclosed (and are not even addressed) by the Fuehrer and Shah references, whether taken alone or combined.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that even if the Fuehrer and Shah references are combined (the properness of which is not conceded) it does not render unpatentable claim 17, so that claim 17 is allowable.

Claims 18 to 30 depend from claim 17, and are therefore allowable for the same reasons as claim 17.

Claims 31 and 32 include features like those of claim 17, and are therefore allowable for essentially the same reasons as claim 17.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of the obviousness rejections is respectfully requested.

In sum, claims 17 to 32 are allowable.

Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is respectfully requested.

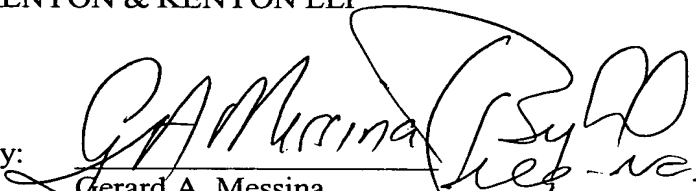
Respectfully submitted,

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